

forward in light of an increasingly complex global security environment. Garrett has distinguished himself as an attorney who worked tirelessly to provide proactive, accurate, and innovative legal advice on legally complex, sensitive issues impacting operations, procurement, fiscal matters, labor, ethics issues, environmental concerns, and intelligence law. Furthermore, he has demonstrated an unmatched record of leadership while overseeing the provision of legal advice by more than 800 civilian and military attorneys within OGC, ensuring the successful execution of Navy and Marine Corps missions worldwide.

Throughout his career, Garrett has received various awards for his outstanding contributions to the Navy, the Department of Defense (DoD), and our nation. These include the Department of the Navy Meritorious and Superior Civilian Service Awards, the Presidential Rank Award of Meritorious Executive, and other performance-related accolades.

Madam Speaker, I offer Garrett my congratulations on retiring from federal service after a career of great contribution to our Nation's defense and to the well-being of all those who have served in the Navy. I hope all of my colleagues will join me in recognizing Garrett L. Resing as he reaches this milestone and in wishing him all the best in the future.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF COMMANDER MERLE SMITH

#### HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 20, 2021*

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise today in honor of the life of the late Commander Merle James Smith Jr., the first Black graduate of the United States Coast Guard (USCG) Academy in New London, CT, and the first Black officer to command a warship in close quarters combat. Commander Smith passed away June 16, 2021, at the age of 76. It was an honor to know Commander Merle Smith and bare witness to all the incredible milestones he achieved in his life. He was a true patriot who always placed others before himself.

Born in Greenville, South Carolina to retired Army Colonel Merle James Smith Sr. and Jacqueline T. Smith, Merle grew up in many cities across the United States as well as Germany and Japan. He graduated from Aberdeen High School in Maryland before choosing to attend the Coast Guard Academy in 1962 to play football under the coaching of Otto Graham, the former professional Cleveland Browns quarterback player.

Graduating with a degree in marine engineering in 1966, Officer Smith's first assignment was to serve aboard the *Minnetonka* as a communication officer. He went on to command the Coast Guard Cutter, *Cape Walsh*, for two years before joining forces in Vietnam where he commanded the USCG Cutters *Point Mast* and *Point Ellie*, and made history serving as the first Black commanding officer in close quarters combat. He commanded these ships through more than eighty fire support missions during the successful Operation Market Time, which halted the movement of supplies into South Vietnam. For his heroic

service, Commander Smith earned a Bronze star, a Navy Meritorious Unit Citation, Presidential Unit Citation, Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry and Vietnam Campaign Medal, among several other accolades.

After returning from the war, Commander Smith was stationed at Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington, D.C. There, he attended George Washington University's School of Law where he met his wife of 47 years, Lynda. Upon graduating with a Juris Doctor, Commander Smith moved back to Connecticut to resume his activities at the Academy, this time as a professor in law. As expected, Commander Smith excelled in his role as a professor and gained notoriety for his ability to keep his students engaged. Commander Smith went on to teach for 13 years and after enriching the minds of thousands of cadets—Commander Smith retired from this role and his active duty service in 1979. Commander Smith's service to our nation however continued at the Coast Guard Reserves for nine years as Commander of the Coast Guard Reserve. Commander Smith simultaneously was recruited by our nation's largest submarine manufacturer, General Dynamic Electric Boat, to join their legal team. Commander Smith worked at Electric Boat for 16 years and made his way up to Chief Council before officially retiring in 1995. From beginning to end, awe inspiring is the only way to really describe what was Commander Smith's career and life. To memorialize all he did for our nation—the Coast Guard Academy announced it will rename its Military Officers Club in honor of him and here in D.C.—our very own National Museum of African American History and Culture proclaimed that they will set up a special exhibit in honor of Commander Smith and his life.

Madam Speaker, it is an honor to represent constituents who are as humble, dutiful, and distinguished as Commander Smith. While we mourn his passing, we can take pride in his legacy which will continue to echo through the United States Coast Guard community as an example to our future military leaders. Please keep Commander Smith's family—his loving wife Lynda, children Merle J. Smith III, Chelsea, and Danielle—in your thoughts as they now carry his memory forward. I ask that the entire House join me in recognizing his life and service to our nation.

#### MORE FUNDING FOR POLICING

#### HON. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN

OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 20, 2021*

Mr. SABLAN. Madam Speaker, today, I introduce legislation that gives this House an opportunity to provide more funding for policing.

My bill does this by allowing the Northern Mariana Islands and American Samoa to be treated as two separate entities for the purposes of the Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant program. Currently, the Marianas and American Samoa are lumped together for funding, unlike the other U.S. insular areas—Puerto Rico, Guam, and the United States Virgin Islands—which are treated as individual jurisdictions, as are all fifty States.

By fixing this inequity in funding for police in the Northern Marianas and American Samoa, we can help our men and women in blue receive the necessary training and equipment they need to keep our communities safe. Making this change will also provide more funding to support prosecutors and the courts, as well as justice-related initiatives aimed at crime prevention.

Local law enforcement is increasingly the first line of defense against the evolving security threats our country faces. We must do all we can to recognize the vital role of our police in maintaining public safety.

The gentlelady from American Samoa, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, and the gentleman from Hawaii, Mr. KAHELE, are original cosponsors of the bill.

I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan legislation.

#### THE AMERICAN IDEAL

#### HON. VIRGINIA FOXX

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 20, 2021*

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, recently, I received an impassioned letter from Elizabeth Bradley of Bessemer City, North Carolina, about the American ideal.

In her letter she writes, "The American ideal is the revolutionary thought that it is not by government, nor wealth, nor any human intervention that people have rights, but by the divine power of God."

Ms. Bradley is exactly right, Madam Speaker.

The American ideal has withstood the test of time because of those who put their faith in God's plan rather than their own.

Madam Speaker, let us never forget that we are one nation under God, and the freedoms we proudly espouse are a gift that He has bestowed upon us.

#### THE AMERICAN IDEAL

My name is Elizabeth Bradley, and I am 18 years old. Recently the President challenged anyone to define America, claiming that it could not be done. I felt lead to write this short essay, not only defining what is truly American and outlining the most basic steps towards restoring us to our former glory. I encourage the reader to share the ideas presented in this essay at any and every opportunity, and I thank the reader in advance for taking the time to read them.

It comes upon my conscience this day, July 2, 2021, to make note of the American Ideal, which is the very thing that has been the cornerstone of my upbringing and second only in my very identity to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I am inclined to write this not only for myself but for the multitude like me who are filled with anguish at the state of the nation in which we live. I struggled in my younger years with the idea that my country is so divided against itself. I have many times over feared the self-division or conquering of the U.S. by a foreign power. But it occurs to me now that America is not and never, in concept or reality, has been a particular plot of land. The United States as we call it is only the land in which the American Ideal has been allowed to flourish. And while it will be a dismal day when the current government and land are inevitably overrun, America is not a thing that can truly be destroyed. America is an idea, a rather great one, in which people are